

## Montana Common Core Shifts in ELA/Literacy

Shift 1: K-5 Balancing Informational & Literary Texts	Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts. Elementary school classrooms are places where students access the world – science, social studies, the arts and literature – through text. At least 50 percent of what students read is informational.
Shift 2: 6-12 Knowledge in the Content Areas	Content area teachers outside of the ELA classroom emphasize literacy experiences in their planning and instruction. Students learn through domain-specific texts in science and social studies classrooms, rather than referring to the text, they are expected to learn from what they read.
Shift 3: Staircase of Complexity	In order to prepare students for the complexity of college and career-ready texts, each grade level requires a “step” of growth on the “staircase.” Students read the central, grade-appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient; they create more time and space in the curriculum for this close and careful reading, and provide appropriate and necessary scaffolding and supports so the text is possible for students reading below grade level to read.
Shift 4: Text-based Answers	Students have rich and rigorous conversations which are dependent on all students reading a common text. Teachers insist that classroom experiences stay deeply connected to the text and that students develop habits for making evidentiary arguments based on the text both in conversation as well as in writing, to assess their comprehension of a text.
Shift 5: Writing from Sources	Writing needs to emphasize use of evidence to inform or make an argument rather than the personal narrative and other forms of decontextualized prompts. While the narrative still has an important role, students develop skills through written arguments that respond to the ideas, events, facts and arguments presented in the texts they read.
Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary	Students constantly build the vocabulary they need to be able to access grade-level complex texts. By focusing strategically on comprehension of pivotal and commonly found words (such as “discourse,” “generation,” “theory,” and “principled”) teachers constantly build students’ ability to access more complex texts across the content areas.

This document was adapted from *Common Core “Shifts”* originally published by *engage*ny.